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211333Z Nov 05

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 002352

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF DISASTER FOR HONDURAS

¶11. As a result of excessive flooding in Northern Honduras from the remnants of Tropical Depression 27 and a new low pressure system, which has produced rainfall of 18 to 20 inches during the past 48 hours, the Chief of Mission has determined that the disaster is of sufficient magnitude to warrant US government assistance. The disaster is beyond the capacity of the GOH to effectively respond, and the GOH has officially requested USG disaster assistance. The Chief of Mission is therefore exercising the disaster assistance authority, as per 2 FAM 061-062.

¶12. The Ambassador's authority of \$125,000 will be used for the purchase of humanitarian assistance in the form of personal hygiene and kitchen kits for displaced persons relocated in shelters in the departments of Yoro, Atlantida and Colon.

¶13. A request has been made by GOH Permanent Emergency Commission Commissioner Luis Gomez on November 18.

¶14. Host country agencies involved in relief operations are COPECO, which is coordinating relief operations, ministry of health, which is addressing health concerns in shelters, and SOPTRAVI, which is carrying out repairs to damaged and closed secondary roads.

¶15. Preliminary assessment by COPECO indicates that approximately 2,500 persons have been displaced, of which over 1,800 are in temporary shelters. Given the forecast of additional rains over the next 48 hours, these numbers are expected to rise significantly. No deaths have been reported.

¶16. We do not have information on U.S. citizens in the affected areas.

¶17. Advisor Phil Gelman is already in country and will continue to monitor the situation in coordination with the MDRO and local authorities. Regards.

Ford